**Year 8**

**Science Fiction**

**Content:**

Students will examine the idea of science fiction as a means by which issues of human nature and evolution are explored. The key element of science fiction is **change**; either that which is indicative of the direction society is, or might be taking, or that which gives rise to some kind of dramatic incident(s) or situation (s). Viewed in this way, science fiction can be regarded as a way of exploring human nature, individually and as a species, and expressing ideas ***about*** human nature, via the mechanism of fictional expression with the freedom and scope of imagined worlds, technologies and historical directions.

**Key Terms:**

* Genre
* Format
* Reality
* Fantasy
* Utopia/dystopia
* Evolution
* Representation
* Production elements
* Production conventions

**Aims and Objectives:**

***Skills***

* Identify key aesthetic and thematic features of science fiction.
* Identify conventions of science fiction.
* Write for a specified audience.
* Write in a specified style (genre).
* Write to a theme.
* Analyse text for:
  + Engagement with the idea of social commentary.
  + Use of creativity to engage with the idea of drama through change.

***Knowledge***

* Definition of science fiction concepts.
* Understanding of conventional structures of science fiction storytelling in:
  + Story writing
  + Sound Plays
  + Graphic Novels
  + Film Scripts
* Convention narrative structures, including characters, settings, and storylines.

***Understanding***

* That science fiction is an art form that explores human nature and the effects of change in the context of future possibilities.
* How to plan and execute a written piece for a particular format, intention and genre.

Learning activity Identify science fiction genre. Examine science fiction art works. Discuss science fiction as an art form that responds to questions about what human beings and their world will be like in ‘the future’. Explain science fiction as expression that looks at change in the world due to future technological advancement and the social change that will occur as a consequence. Emphasis is on the idea that the artist is creating a valid and believable ‘reality’ for the audience. Class will define conventions of science fiction as preparation for analysis of professional science fiction texts. The class will discuss the ideas that drive science fiction writing, and observe excerpts of science fiction films and television shows. From this examination, they will be invited to find a piece of storytelling that has ‘science fiction’ themes and structures.

Student Product ‘Show and Tell’ style presentation of the ideas and examples they find.

Formative/Summative? Summative.

SF conventions – special effects,

Learning activity Study a specific science fiction text. View scenes from The Jetsons and Ghost in the Shell. (There is acceptable content in the latter for year 8, but you need to check the bits you watch. Ghost in the Shell can be supplemented with scenes from Blade Runner, which is thematically linked.) Discuss how they are both views of the future, one *Utopian* and one *Dystopian.* Clarify the idea that science fiction looks at the concept of change; either that which is indicative of the direction society is, or might be taking, or that which gives rise to some kind of dramatic incident(s) or situation (s). This idea of ‘change’ is linked to social and technological change.

Student Product Written analysis of professional science fiction text; identifying key characteristics of the genre. The idea of ‘change’ is central to the analysis. Students to explore and present other professional examples that conform to this definition.

Formative/Summative? Summative.

Learning activity Students will create their own science fiction text. Drawing on the knowledge gained from activities, investigations and discussion in Learning Activities 1&2, students are invited create their own science fiction scenario, giving particular attention to themes, tableaux or motifs appropriate to the genre. As a drafted piece, they will conceive of, plan and execute a creative piece with the stated goal of writing for a particular format, audience, theme and purpose.

Student Product Short Story. Movie Scenario. Graphic novel illustrations. Animation storyboard.

Formative/Summative? Formative.